

## **Useful terms to know:**

### **Flash Flood**

A flood which is caused by heavy or excessive rainfall in a short period of time, generally less than 6 hours. Also, at times a dam failure can cause a flash flood, depending on the type of dam and time period during which the break occurs.

### **Flash Flood Warning**

Issued to inform the public, emergency management, and other cooperating agencies that flash flooding is in progress, imminent, or highly likely.

### **Flash Flood Watch**

Issued to indicate current or developing hydrologic conditions that are favorable for flash flooding in and close to the watch area, but the occurrence is neither certain or imminent.

### **A Hurricane Watch**

An announcement that hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or higher) are possible within the specified coastal area. Because hurricane preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, the hurricane watch is issued 48 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical-storm-force winds.

### **A Hurricane Warning**

An announcement that hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or higher) are expected somewhere within the specified coastal area. Because hurricane preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, the hurricane warning is issued 36 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical-storm-force winds.

### **A Tropical Storm Watch**

An announcement that tropical storm conditions (sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph) are possible within the specified coastal area within 48 hours.

### **A Tropical Storm Warning**

An announcement that tropical storm conditions (sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph) are expected somewhere within the specified coastal area within 36 hours.

### **The Hurricane Saffir-Simpson Scale**

Used to measure the hurricane's present intensity, one through five. This is used to give an estimate of the potential property damage and flooding expected along the coast from a hurricane landfall. Wind speed is the determining factor in the scale, as storm surge values are highly dependent on the slope of the continental shelf in the landfall region.

**Severe Thunderstorm**

A thunderstorm that produces a tornado, winds of at least 58 mph (50 knots), and/or hail at least 1 inch in diameter. Structural wind damage may imply the occurrence of a severe thunderstorm.

**Severe Thunderstorm Watch**

Tells you when and where severe thunderstorms are likely to occur. Watch the sky and stay tuned to know when warnings are issued.

**Severe Thunderstorm Warning**

Issued when severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar. Warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property to those in the path of the storm.

**Tornado Watch**

Tornadoes are possible in your area. Remain alert for approaching storms. Know what counties or parishes are in the watch area by listening to NOAA Weather Radio or your local radio/television outlets.

**Tornado Warning**

A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar.